

SLEEPING IN THE BED WITH JAKE, MY THREE YEAR-OLD GRANDSON



You curl backward in the curve of my body,
your head under my nose, your fresh body
hot as a sausage, your scent flaming from
your scalp, the roots of your hair, and I revel
as in a flower, its petals licking my nostrils.

My sleep beside your sleep lightens when you
pitch yourself around in bed like a sparking
pinwheel's pleasure in itself, or a puzzle
piece shifting for its own fit.

I wake near dawn because the round
stone of your head butts against my back,
its deep heat burning through my gown.
That fire sunk in the rock of yourself
will not gutter until I've long gone
dark and cold. Even then those tongues,
orange and indigo, may sometimes say
my name.

Jane Gentry Vance

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